Congo News Letter

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Christmas Greetings

OCTOBER 1952

CONGO NEWS LETTER

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Christmas Issue

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MRS. H. D. BROWN

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Congo News Letter

CHRISTMAS WELCOME

They left no room in the crowded inn
For the strangers that Christmas Day,
So only the hay of the manger bed
Cushioned Him where He lay.

The angels sang and the shepherds came
And the Wise Men brought gifts most rare
To give to the Child with God's gift of Life,
But those in the inn did not care.

Today other children are born on earth
Asking room in the hearts that care.
They ask for the news of the Gift of that Child,
That Gift for all men to share.

What gift do you bring to the manger bed?
What do you share from your store?
Do you bear news of the Saviour's Love
Or have you shut your door?

EMILY KEYES

CHRISTMAS

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." — John 1:14.

CHRISTMAS comes to lands differing in physical features — landscape and climate — differing in inhabitants, their spiritual and cultural heritage, their customs. Christmas comes to some as a gala holiday, a time to give and receive gifts, to make merry; to others a time of happy reunions, endless preparations for celebrations in homes and churches; to commercial companies it means a time of big business; to some it is one day among many set aside as a religious holiday; to others it is a day to remember the birth of Jesus by receiving gifts and having feasts; to others simply a service of worship, recalling the events of our Lord's birth. Any of these phases of celebration may be combined in different ways, but to a large portion of this earth's population Christmas is a special day. Regardless of how it is observed, or whether the observers are conscious of its real meaning, there is only one reason why we have Christmas — it is because two thousand years ago Jesus, God's Son, came to this earth.

The world has unmeasured blessings today because of Christ's coming. The fact that Christmas is celebrated in so many parts of the world means that the Gospel of Christ has been carried to the uttermost parts of the earth. As we reflect on what this land of Congo was like only seventy five years ago, we can see the miracle that has happened here — because Christ came. As you read the following pages telling of some accomplishments during the past year and compare them with the primitive, Christless people whom our pioneers met here less than one century ago, you will be assured that Christ did come and dwells here year in and year out.

There are many signs which show that Christ has come to earth, but the greatest sign is LOVE. Is it not true anywhere at any time, when Christ comes to an individual or a church or a country that there is a transformation because love is there? Wherever Christ's Gospel is carried, love goes with it, for He is Love. We read in I John 4:7, "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is

of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God." We know where Christ dwells, for there we find Love. When God sent His Son it was Love that prompted the gift. Does Christmas, whatever may be our way of observing it, bring to our thoughts and hearts the Love that came on that first Christmas day?

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

— CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

GLEANINGS FROM THE STATION REPORTS

ANOTHER year has gone by. It is good to look back, for then we realize that there has been growth. From day to day it seems like mighty slow progress, yet during the complete year we have seen many signs of advance. — BOKO

The high spot of the year arrived just recently when a young mother who had spent over a month at the hospital, upon returning home, bid us take away all her fetishes. She had heard the "wondrous story" and was ready to follow Jesus. — KIKONGO

The women brought their offerings on the World Day of Prayer — peanuts, rice, peppers, etc. These were bought by the

station school, and the money — over thirty-four dollars — was sent to the Congo Protestant Council for work among the women of Léopoldville. — VANGA

The high spot of the year has been the news of the new school. With the granting of the money from the General Board we rejoiced and tightened our belts. The money which was first calculated to be adequate will scarcely build ten rooms, on a much less grand scale. Now with word from the Woman's Board we rejoice with plans for a new school for girls. The coming of the contractor has made it real for us. — LEOPOLDVILLE

In order to have the whole community together in daily chapel all school children must be seated under the trees on either side of the church. On Sundays students, men and women, fill the church for one service and the children have their own worship with much of the program carried on by themselves, under leadership and supervision. — KIMPESE

In the district one woman volunteer visits three or four villages every month to bring the Word of Life. Here is a Bible Woman without pay, just trying to bring to others what she has experienced in Christ. — MOANZA

The hospital census has been 100% most of the time and has frequently exceeded the bed capacity. At the present time we are having to classify our patients as to their degree of illness in order to assign beds to the most seriously ill. The present rate is about 45 deliveries a month. There has been a heavy schedule on the surgical service and recently we have had two operating rooms running simultaneously. — SONA BATA

Last year we were deeply concerned over the *Kukusa* movement (a heathen movement which uses enough of the Christian symbols to confuse the Christians). Because of it we were able to report few baptisms. It now seems to be in the past and we rejoice in the many manifestations of God's Spirit working in the hearts of the people. — BANZA MANTEKE

The School Inspector was very much impressed, as is everyone who visits E.P.I., with the family emphasis: seating by families in church, education of the whole family, etc. And much was made of the fact that he came with his wife and child, who

sat with him on the platform to be introduced. — KIMPESE

Over 6000 followers have been personally examined by the missionaries. Of this number 4154 have been baptised, bringing the active church membership to over 20,000. Since there are another 13,000 preparing for baptism, it is evident that this steady growth is to remain the dominating factor for the next few years. — VANGA

The Laubach program has been of great help in decreasing the number of young women coming for baptism who have to be turned down for illiteracy. — SONA BATA

For their special project last year the classes in agriculture built the first in a series of fish ponds. After many failures we have at last succeded in stocking it. — MOANZA

Our leper colony has increased considerably. We had a family of nearly 300, but fortunately nearly 40 were able to return to their villages and will return for periodic examinations. In one day 15 new lepers descended upon us from Kasi. They were in a pitiful state and had been sadly neglected. — BANZA MANTEKE

The most heartwarming and encouraging help came from the Vanga church. They offered to send teachers and pay their salaries. A whole truckload of folks arrived the last of January. How thankful we are to know that a Congo church has been so filled with the spirit of Christ and the desire that their own brethren should be given the opportunity to hear the Good News that they have given sacrificially of their gifts and talents. — BOKO

One of the projects of our women has been the digging and carrying of sand for our new church. One day I worked with them and hauled up sand from the river with the truck. They dug four loads that day. — KIKONGO

Without our faithful workers our work would never have gone ahead. Lubikulu as pastor, Mattie as nurse, Yilela, Wasunzulu and Nzanzadi in the school, all put their life blood into the work. We thank God for them. They are to us the promise of what God has in his plans for many of our people here. We pray that as the city work becomes increasingly harder they and we may continue to show God's redeeming love here in Léopoldville. — LEOPOLDVILLE

EVANGELISM IN A PROGRESSIVE STATE

THEODORE E. BUBECK

THE large number of books and articles on the Belgian Congo leave no doubt in the reader's minds that the heart of Africa is really going places. Granted that the picture is somewhat overdrawn and the information gathered at the Regina Hotel in Léopoldville or some other spot equally removed from the life of half of Africa which the writers never see, yet the fact remains that there has been greater progress within the Congo State in the past five years than at any other period of its history.

Apartment houses five stories high, office buildings nine stories high, Diesel locomotives, excellent plane service, cars, refrigerators and much labor-saving machinery have done something for the Congo which is amazing. A well-controlled economic system, increased wages, free medical service, subsidized mission schools have supported the change in another area of life. In very few fields has the change not been as spectacular.

It is perhaps not to be expected that the moral and spiritual development has kept pace with the outward changes or that strong characters and spiritual giants have sprung up overnight. We can train a lad in one week to keep a daily check on a hydraulic ram and keep it in repair. Masons and carpenters can be trained in six months. Typists, mechanics, bookkeepers and ship captains take a bit longer to train. Pastors, teachers and nurses remain in classes for four or five years and frequently amaze us by their ability. But character and spiritual growth and stability are acquired in schools which are not subsidized by the state, which offer no scholarships and issue no diplomas.

What are some of the deeper spiritual and moral reactions to the sudden outward changes, to the flood of Western mechanized equipment and to the contact with modern secularism? We listened intently to the reports which came from every part of our American Baptist Mission field here in Congo.

Our Field Secretary reported a considerable drop in the number of church members from 46,000 to 40,000, but a corres-

ponding drop was also reported in the number of school children from 39,000 to 32,600. Is the drop due entirely to a closer check on school and church, or perhaps to a roving population and the growing population in the urban areas where the churches and school cannot cope with the increase?

How then is one to account for the increased contributions for schools which the same report calls attention to? The picture is somewhat confused. Scholastic standards have risen excepting for the ministry; and the 113 churches in our Congo Baptist field are manned by fine men who have been inadequately trained and at the present no provision has been made for such training as is needed.

All were pleased at the report of the Bible Institute at Kikongo with one couple to train church leaders. Many were troubled at the decline in the number of pastors being trained at our training school at Kimpese. Disconcerting was the report that fewer village catechists are available, men who resemble the country pastors of a bygone day at home.

Much in the station reports was reassuring notably from Vanga where over 6000 followers have been examined this year for baptism. Of this number 4,154 have been received into the church following baptism. One third of the field still remains to be visited, followers to be examined and candidates who have met the conditions laid down by the church to be baptized and received into the fellowship. Already the membership is over 20,000 in that one field with 13,000 awaiting baptism.

As against that another station reported concern over the "wave of indifference and secularism" which is overtaking the church. "The fact is that unless a real revival takes place in our churches we shall have difficulty holding our own." Another with equal apprehension reports that few were received into the church because of the *Kukusa* movement, a sort of neo-prophet movement steeped in witchcraft and magic.

Our church at Léopoldville reported an increase in attendance and in the number of followers, members and adherents. That was somewhat reassuring, for besides our Mission Secretary and his wife who are stationed there we have only one single wo-

man to care for the church work and the school in a community of a quarter of a million Africans. The British Baptist Mission and the Salvation Army who share with us the responsibility of ministering to the Congolese in that growing metropolis are relatively no better off than we in staff. Growth, progress, advance all along the way excepting in the area of life from which spring all activity good or evil. An enormous increase is reported in the number of Europeans who have come to the Congo; an increase in every field excepting Christian missions. There is no thought of holding onto responsibilities which should be shifted in accord with our mission policy to the younger churches, but there is a growing burden in the hearts of many of us that the leadership of the Church of Christ in the Congo should be well trained. It is the hope of our Christian mission that before long we may have a college or a Christian university, but it would be tragic if the life of our mission work centered around an educational plan or institution. The work of evangelism must go on in the finest and fullest sense and must keep pace with life in every other area of our rapidly growing State. There is a neo-paganism, a neo-heathenism, a neo-animism which is infinitely worse and harder to meet than that which Livingstone found a century ago. Unless it is met with a strong, a virile, a warm evangel, the future looks dark. Congo has this Gospel. It remains for us with adequate staff, (double the present), to train pastors, teachers and nurses to bring that full Gospel to a restless and confused people in a growing and developing colony.

And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room in the inn. LUKE 2:7.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. LUKE 2:10-11.

WORK AMONG WOMEN AND GIRLS

MARGARET HALL

THIS year brought to us Miss Shank from the Woman's Board. She visited extensively each station and all parts of the field. Then because she could not remain for Conference in July and the Conference date could not be advanced, she called together all the women of the mission to discuss particularly work among women and girls. Three main divisions of work were considered:

I	*Work for Women*
II	*Education for Girls*
III	*Christian Home Program.*

Reference was made to the findings of an inter-mission conference held eight years ago at Kimpese, at the time of Miss Shank's previous visit to Congo. The plan presented then for station and village meetings was clothed in a definite program calling for yearly leadership-training meetings at mission stations with representatives from district churches. There would be, besides worship, recreation and sewing hours, class periods which would include Bible, Christian Home and Hygiene. There would be a series of twelve lessons in each group, the idea being that the women on returning to their church posts could then use these lessons for their monthly women's meetings at the church centers. And from there women would go back to their villages to hold weekly prayer meetings.

Bible lessons would follow *Banengwa ba Bibila* (Women of the Bible). Christian Home would deal with such problems as:

Our children in school	Liquor
Doctor and witch doctor	Gambling
Family worship	Sabbath observance
Meaning of Easter	Disciplining of children
Village responsibilities	Responsibility to the church
Christian marriage	Women in other lands
Telling Bible stories	Meaning of Christmas

Hygiene would give some help in:

Prenatal care
Care at birth
Post-natal care of mother
Bathing the baby
Baby care — colds
Baby's first food
Cleanliness in the home
Baby's food
Worms
Personal habits of child
Itch and lice

It was felt there should be on each station a Women's Center, a building planned as girls' work and study hall in connection with the girls' dormitory compound, to be used as center of activities for the girls and women on the station. The building to be one large room with a fireplace and storerooms, furnished with tables, benches, cupboards, equipment for cooking and sewing lessons, etc. The following activities would then have a definite home:

Girls' work and study hall,
Bible classes and prayer meetings,
Sewing and cooking and singing classes,
Nursery and baby clinic,
Recreation for girls and women,
Women's conferences,
Preparation of Sunday School lessons with teachers,
Preparation for visitation of hospital and villages,
Adult literacy classes, etc.

It was felt that Christian leadership among our women in the present stage of the work in Congo can best be developed by separate schools for girls where emphasis may be laid upon their particular needs. This does not rule out the admission of girls in the upper schools, where as yet the number of girls qualifying is not sufficient to warrant separate classes.

There should be continuous emphasis in our schools on the importance of literacy and Christian training for marriage. It still seems necessary to have classes for fiancées of boys training for Christian work, in order that they may make the best use of the opportunities given in the higher training schools, to which they will go with their husbands. Wherever possible, the special classes for fiancées should be separate from the regular classes in schools

for younger girls.

It was gratifying to note the increasing number of girls in the higher classes, and the number of women being used as teachers. We were happy, too, that a few girls have finished the medical course and that we now have a girl from our mission, the wife of one of our students, taking the full course for monitors at Kimpese.

It is always easy to make plans so we are glad that at the Mission Conference in July it was possible to further discuss ways and means of actually going ahead with the programs envisaged at the Women's Conference. We pray God for strength, courage and staff necessary to place upon work among women and girls the emphasis long overdue.

STATION REPORTS - KIMPESE

ELEVEN A.B.F.M.S. students were graduated from the two-year Bible course in special mid-year exercises.

From school children and house boys thirty-five were baptized on Palm Sunday.

The women have been having their own chapel service on Saturdays, those receiving training in conducting women's meetings taking the lead.

The State School Inspector was very much impressed by the family emphasis at E.P.I. and much was made of the fact that he came with his wife and child who sat with him on the platform to be introduced.

The building program continues. The new carpenter shop is completed; the monitor building nearing completion; the foundations of the primary school building ready to pour; the secondary school site cleared and retaining walls begun.

Reports coming in from faithful and effective E.P.I. men and their wives at work in the field encourage us to continue with God's guidance to strive to impart the richness of His grace.

ADVANCING IN MEDICAL MISSIONS

ESTHER EHNBOM

SOME of the most interesting and thought-provoking moments of the Congo Conference are the reading of the reports of the stations.

The Sona Bata School for Nurses is being transferred to Kimpese. How proud we Protestants are to have such a fine hospital. In spite of the changing of the school a large medical work will be maintained at Sona Bata. The Sona Bata area will miss the Tuttles as they leave. The report states, "At the present time we are having to classify our patients as to their degree of illness in order to assign beds to the most seriously ill patients." There has been an increase of about 30 % in the number of maternity cases; a heavy surgery schedule has been maintained. Because of the frequency of accident cases involving fractures the staff feels the need of a portable X-Ray machine.

Vanga also has a large medical program. Due to the illness of Dr. Osterholm the work has been handicapped; however so far this year he has done 315 operations and there have been 275 maternity cases. He pleads for reinforcements to take advantage of the great opportunities, "for we believe that greater works than these can God accomplish if He has instruments of service."

Kikongo has been handicapped through the years by inadequate housing facilities. Instead of wards they have had little mud or leaf houses. Now they are rejoicing that foundations are being laid for a twenty-bed ward. The baby clinic enrolment is 904. During the year 13 orphans were cared for and housed with the school girls. The high spot of the year was when a mother, who had spent over a month at the hospital, threw away all her fetishes.

Léopoldville is well taken care of by Miss Mattie, one of the first girls to graduate from the Sona Bata Nurses School. She not only cares for the school and church family but many others who come for help.

Moanza has its share of anemic and underfed children. Their work is done without a doctor. However Dr. Osterholm has made

some visits during the year. This means much for the work. Moanza's message is, "We plead for a doctor for Moanza so that the people of this area may have the help and care that they should have in order to come into their rightful heritage of good health."

Boko reports, "Our one lone Native nurse continues his daily ministration to the sick folk and his faithfulness and good spirit are bringing physical help and spiritual strength to many." The Bayaka people are still firm believers in witchcraft and have many home treatments which often take away health instead of renewing strength. It seems as though few have been touched by the power of Christ. Boko reported one case of a mother who was almost dying of malnutrition as was her baby. The mother had already lost two babies but had hoped to save this one. She stayed six weeks on the station and the baby seemed to be gaining. One night the baby died. The nurse could find no reason for its death. Probably Native medicine had been given or witchcraft had been practised. The mother insisted on taking the dead baby back to the village. There the villagers helped her mourn the heathen way. They have fear and respect for death but not for life.

Banza Manteke misses Dr. Freas but we are happy over the visits of Dr. Walker of Sona Bata. We are fortunate in having an unusual group of nurses in the various departments of work. Mboko at the leper colony had about 300 patients. We are happy to say that forty were able to return to their villages. Twenty-five lepers were baptized and more are seeking to live a Christian life. We have a fine pastor at the leper colony. The maternity work continues under the able help of Mama Lena Tusamo. The eight baby clinics as well as the seven dispensaries continue to bring help to the villages.

May our medical work in the Congo ever go forward with Christ.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. ISAIAH 9:6.

THE TEACHERS REPORT

MARGARET JUMP

TO do justice to our educational program would require many more pages than are allotted to this article. It would be necessary to write at length of Boko where young teachers are the only Christian witnesses in certain villages and areas; of Moanza where a young girl graduate is now taking her place as teacher in the girls' school; of Kikongo which sends out a plea for trained teachers; of Sona Bata where a new building is urgently needed; of Banza Manteke where we are carrying on a program of secondary education; of Vanga where more than 4000 boys and girls are enrolled in regional schools; and of Léopoldville where the plans have been approved for a new school. We would need to mention too Kimpese the highest school in our system, the Bible Institute at Kikongo, and the medical school at Sona Bata soon to be transferred to Kimpese.

We would want to share with you the problems which we faced in our discussions. How can we meet our responsibilities with our limited staff? How can we provide for all the boys and girls who want to go to school? How can we build the necessary buildings? Funds can in many cases be secured from the government, but who is to supervise the construction? What can we do to meet the needs for school literature both in Kikongo and in French? How can we better coordinate our efforts so as to make the best use of available materials? These and many others are questions which we discussed.

And we must report too the progress that has been made this last year. We would want you to know that there are more students than ever in our schools, that three of our stations now have established teacher-training schools, that several are beginning special home-making courses for girls, that the Congolese too are taking the responsibility for the education of their children by supporting the regional schools and establishing manual training courses in the district. We do not want to forget the advances made at Kimpese where the six-year normal course is to begin in

1953, where the first group of pastors is graduating from the superior theological course, where the first class of students has begun work in the new medical school, a cooperative effort with four other Protestant missions. The Bible Institute at Kikongo has its first graduation this year. It seems to be a year of "firsts." Remy Malutama, an outstanding young teacher from the Banza Manteke field, is going to Belgium to complete his studies there. He will be our first college graduate. We hope others may follow.

A report on the educational work would not be complete without sharing our hopes for the future. They are many. We hope to see all of our Christian children have the opportunity to learn and to claim their rightful heritage. Congo is hungry for education, and it is our responsibility to see that this education is Christ centered. We plan for more teacher training schools, for home-making courses for girls so that the women of Congo may take their place beside the men. We must train lay leaders too who will make their contribution to the new Congo. Our church needs well educated and consecrated laymen. We hope to raise the standards of our schools for pastors, teachers, and nurses.

Our responsibility is great and the task at times seems to be beyond us. But we know we do not work alone. And our confidence in the future is based on the knowledge that we are doing the Master's work. For Jesus too was a teacher.

STATION REPORT BANZA MANTEKE

ONE of our secondary school teachers, Remy Malutama, has gone to Belgium to study, in further preparation for teaching. He has already been in the French Camerouns for two years, attending a Presbyterian school. There he completed the equivalant of two years of university. Now he will work for a diploma from a Belgian normal school, fitting him to teach and direct one of the Congo Schools. Remy is the first in our mission to go to Belgium to study. We hope that when others are ready we shall have a school far enough advanced to teach them here in Congo. We are working to that end, The boys are advancing as fast we can teach them, but staff and building must be provided to carry them further.

ARISE AND BUILD

ELMER G. HALL

THE response of the 1952 Conference to the theme "We will arise and build," by voting requests for buildings, came to totals so unprecedented that some began to be frightened and to ask, "Are we beside ourselves?"

But broken down item by item: Had not Alice needed that ironing shelter for years? If any station school deserves a new building it is Sona Bata whose people are in the doldrums over losing the medical school just now and most of the missionaries they have had every reason to feel belonged to them. And an adequate school building in the capital city is many years overdue.

Fifty key-workers' houses — all to the same simple plan but recognizing that our steady stand-bys of the years deserve a cut above the almost primitive accommodations we have been able to supply up to now! The cost is from 600 to 1000 dollars depending on local circumstances.

The burden of the Vanga field with its unbelievable opportunities would force most missionaries to say "no building," but in she came with her share of alterations, small buildings and some larger projects; one's faith in faith so much renewed.

Kikongo is not pausing one whit in its building stride, the staff of the Bible Institute determined that with each course, added physical equipment must balance.

Boko, like a new-born colt on tall wavery legs talks in terms of a church building to overshadow the sanctuaries of older stations; and good for them! The largest and best of physical equipment on a mission station should be the Lord's house.

Banza Manteke can without batting an eye or asking for a special builder set out on a building spree: her answer is trained carpenters and masons; which is the logical reward for the patient toil that puts a station in an advanced place. Let B. M. Christians come through now and build a church, a project all their own.

The third residence at Kimpese is not only a response to the request of the Board to aim at dwellings on simpler lines, more

compact and less expensive. It is more significant than just an added mission contribution at E.P.I. It is committing ourselves to secondary education; it is the determination to implement our resolve so to train our best men that they may soon take over many of the tasks we have come here to do. We are determined to have some bona fide African colleagues.

Our pride in the advance of the building program of the hospital for Congo patients and Congo Medical Assistants must be shared with a handful of other missions, but is ours just the same. We are thankful to God that the death of EPAMAC means the birth of IME (*Institut Médical Evangélique*,) in an association with E.P.I. that is bright with promise for the future.

The physical equipment at E.P.I., Kimpese is being daily enlarged towards a degree of adequacy that would delight the heart of Dr. Mabie and has won the praise of former Principal Reynolds, just now retiring to England. The carpenter shop astonishes people who are in the habit of thinking of hand work as a necessary evil. The new six room monitors' building has school library quarters in its upper story. The new primary school with a fifty metre frontage is under way. The plans for a complete secondary school are well advanced. This is E.P.I., preparing to send out families to man the new buildings back on the stations. Thus is the ABFMS of today building in order to press forward to do God's will in this land.

It *need* not be at the expense of neglecting the spiritual development of the people or the carrying of the good news of salvation far into the grassy upland wastes of Boko. But it *may* be unless several professional builders feel God's call immediately and give us a hand. Who will build fires for us under the youth of American Baptists of too much down-sitting and too little uprising? Come on over to Congo and help us!

And when they were come into the house, they young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, frankincense and myrrh. MATT. 2:11.

JUDGMENT DAY

ROSE UHLINGER

THE queazy sinking feeling persisted in the pit of my stomach. In the big sunny room on the second floor of LECO the business of "conference" went ahead at a rapid pace as it had for the better part of a week — a year's program planned in the fields of evangelism, finance, education, property.... But this morning a tenseness could be felt; an expectancy. In a few minutes would be carried in the blackboard whose white or green or yellow chalk marked the fate of each missionary for the coming months — his designation.

For the stations it might mean that the load would be lifted a bit — or made greater. Some newer missionaries would be able to get "settled" for a while; the first time in several years since they had given up home jobs to start the journey to the foreign field. But to others it might mean the pulling up of roots long established in one work and the breaking of close ties with Congolese co-workers and friends, to go to another station where the need at present seemed greater.

To all who were changed it would mean the confusion of packing and moving while trying to carry on the routine work until near the last day; the finishing up of work accounts to turn in and the breaking in of a replacement if there was one. Thoughts of our rather hectic and hurried departure from Banza Manteke a few months back came to mind. When at the January Reference Committee we were designated to Boko, I had decided that this move would be different from the others in our short missionary career — this one would be calmly organized and carried out with each case containing only related articles and of course the contents of each box would be duly noted on the outside. Then settling in a new home would be a cinch. With much optimism I had even hoped that my new two-month old curtains in the living room and slip covers on our borrowed furniture would fit the new house at Boko. (They didn't!) But my grand plans were not to be. The school inspector took that inopportune time to arrive,

and while we were busy piloting him from class to class in the schools which we had been directing, a group of boys, whom we had called in to help, packed anything and everything they could find in the cases at hand and nailed them shut. No contents noted. Five months later we are still hunting for some of our belongings and shipping back the ones that aren't ours.

Soon we should know who would be repeating our experience, for the board was now being carried through the door. Everyone seemed to be holding his breath and I had the feeling that more than one set of fingers was crossed. As the names and stations came into view, there was blank silence; a dull feeling of disappointment spread over the room. No one should have been disappointed, for all knew how short-staffed we were, but one couldn't help hoping for miracles.

On his return Banza Manteke's beloved Doctor Freas was to be designated to another station where he was needed for the medical classes there. No replacement was to be seen for Harry Brown who had to take over as temporary treasurer instead of doing the educational work for which he was assigned to B. M. Sona Bata would lose one of the pillars of their evangelistic and medical work as Doctor Tuttle goes to the Union Medical School at Kimpese in January. And their evangelist, Roland Metzger, was asked to take an early furlough so that his replacement could later replace the Browns at Institut Biblique when they go home. After a change on the board, Léopoldville was again left with only one worker, Miss Benner, for all its school and church work in the big city. Vanga was to get a single educationalist to help with its vast school program, but only after the first of the year, and no educational couple was in sight to start a secondary school there. Moanza, Kikongo and Banza Manteke were still without doctors and Boko without even a nurse. The non-existent builder who had been requested by several stations did not appear. The board was finally voted as recommended with only minor changes But all left conference with heavy hearts and an almost unanimous prayer: "When, oh God, *when*, will they send us the workers we need: the doctors, the nurses, the educationalists, some builders, some office workers, the evangelists.... WHEN?"

IMPRESSIONS OF A NEW MISSIONARY

Carrie E. Sprague

IT was on a bright morning in April when our ship pulled into the muddy waters of the mouth of the Congo River and I caught my first glimpse of the land which was to become my new home. And how different these pretty hills rising abruptly out of the water and covered with green grass and an occasional clump of trees seemed from the thick jungle I was prepared to see. This was the day I had been looking toward during many months of study and yet, when it finally arrived, it came not as the grand exciting climax of an adventure novel but rather it came with a deep quiet sense of real peace and satisfaction in the knowledge that this was where God would have me serve Him. This day marked just another step in the path over which He had been leading. This same peace and contentment continued as I visited our mission station at Banza Manteke and then finally arrived at Sona Bata. It was a thrill to stand before the group of about 200 lepers at their Sunday morning service, to see the radiant smiles on their faces and to hear the rich music that came from their lips and to know that we all had faith in the same risen Saviour as our Redeemer and Master. As the 650 voices at the Banza Manteke worship service joined together in singing hyms written in a strange language but with the old familiar tunes, I wondered if I would ever cease being thrilled at hearing the Congo people sing.

Living conditions? People at home had amply warned me about the horrors of living in a tropical country with the heat and poor living conditions, wild animals, and so forth. I would report that at least for this region of Africa, these ideas are quite erroneous. In fact we missionaries lead a fairly normal existence. We have adequate American style homes, running water (when it runs) electricity in the evenings and food similiar to that which you eat at home. The climate has been cooler than some of our summer weather in New York State and we laugh as we shiver in our sweaters and read about heat waves at home. Of course it is cooler here at Sona Bata than in some other regions because of the moderate

elevation and also at present we are in the cooler season of the year. Wild animals? Thus far I have seen none other than two small snakes and three big spiders and a few birds.

Fellow missionaries? I've been fortunate in already having met most of our missionaries from other stations and I've been pleased to learn first-hand that they are a fine group of well-trained, consecrated Christians who are working hard to make Christ known in Congo and to train Congolese to lead others to Him. We new missionaries are quickly made to feel a part of our Congo family and I am happy to become a member of this group.

Enough work to do? There is an overwhelming amount of it, not only in regard to meeting the physical needs around us in the form of educational and medical work, but also (and more important) in meeting the spiritual needs of this people. And how helpless we new missionaries feel in trying to accomplish this when there is a language barrier between us and the people among whom we work! So it is understandable that an emphasis is placed on language study during our first months here while we are also trying to become oriented in the specialized type of work that we have been trained to do, be it evangelistic, educational, or medical.

It would be dishonest for me to leave you with the impression that we have no inconveniences or that there are no problems or difficulties. It does not take long for a new missionary to sense that there are many difficult problems in regard to the work — many of which seem to have no real solution. One would be very discouraged indeed if it were not for the assurance of God's presence and power to strengthen and encourage His children, and for the knowledge that this is His work and the results must be left in His hands. But despite the discouragements I don't know of any of our missionaries who would wish to be anywhere else. As a senior missionary expressed it in her letter welcoming me to Congo: "You will have days of disappointment and of disillusionment. We have all passed that way, but in spite of them we still believe that Congo is the best place in the world to be, because we know that that is where the Lord wants us to be. Besides, it's fun."

MARGARET G. RATTRAY

MARGARET G. RATTRAY

NEAR midnight last night [June 25, 1952] Miss Maggie, as she is affectionately known to every one, passed quietly over to the other side. The white staff, the teachers, Frank Clark, a group of Christian women who had been for some time taking their turns, two by two, to care for her at night, all these and others stood around her bed where the quiet singing of hymns had been going on for some time; stood there in stillness as her spirit slipped away from us to meet her Beloved Father. There was very little weeping, certainly no noisy weeping, for Miss Maggie had longed to go for some time and talked freely of her going. This was the triumphal end on earth of a life lived for Christ, lived in His presence and devoted entirely to serving His children of her own race. I know too that she, in her simple and happy faith, lifted up the hearts of her friends the missionaries on many occasions and drew them nearer to the Saviour she loved.

She had a stroke a few days ago. In her hospital bed she was, most of her time, out of reach of voice and half-asleep. But she would respond from time to time and a day or two ago I went in to find her lying waiting to be called. She seemed quite unconscious of the presence of those around her. Whenever we went to talk toMaggie, sitting on the verandah of her house she would fill in gaps in the conversation with snatches of hymns she loved. Re membering this and hearing, as it were, her thin, high voice singing the words to me, I leaned over her and said quietly two or three times one line I had often heard her sing: "Safe in the arms of Jesus." She opened her eyes and turned a little and smiled and repeated the line, and repeated it again, and again more dimly as she fell away from full consciousness once more. That is the picture of Miss Maggie I shall carry, lying so frail on her white pillow and murmuring to herself with a look of sweet content: "Safe in the arms of Jesus."

And all the trumpets sounded for her on the other side.

— A. R. D. SIMPSON

MISS MAGGIE OF THE CONGO

Ransomed from Slavery for a Life of Christian Service

MARGUERITE ELDREDGE

FROM the hut of heathen parents the little Congo girl Nkebani, about six years old, was snatched by the hand of ruthless slave traders. But under God, the kind hand of missionary Peter Frederickson paid the coin in 1885 that liberated Nkebani for a period of security and service in the home of Rev. and Mrs. Joseph Clark, first in Congo, and later on their furlough in Scotland. She proved a faithful little helper, and as her knowledge of English increased she was permitted to attend public school. News reached the British Isles of the establishment in Atlanta, Georgia, of Spelman Seminary, a school for Negro girls. Interested friends made it possible for Nkebani to cross the Atlantic and train at Spelman for mission work in her native land. Among these friends was one Captain Rattray whose helping hand led to Nkebani's taking a new name, Margaret Gertrude Rattray. She studied at Spelman from 1891 to 1899.

In 1895 Dr. Carter, pastor of Friendship Baptist church baptized Margaret who accepted Christ's promise of redemption by his finished work on Calvary, and rejoicing in freedom from the burden of sin, pledged her loyalty and life in service to Christ.

Sailing from Boston, Massachusetts, back to Congo in 1900, Margaret, or Maggie as she is best known to all, worked with American and British missionaries, serving continuously as a worker with girls and women at Ikoko, Tshumbiri and Tondo until welcomed into the Heavenly Father's home June 25, 1952. Ransomed from slavery by a man of God, redeemed from sin by Christ, trained for service by some of God's choicest women, Maggie became a "Jesus' friend" in very truth to Congo folk, leading hundreds through childhood years to maturity away from heathen fears, superstitions and ignorance to literacy and fulness of life and joy in Christ.

Miss Maggie never aspired to great learning. She found it difficult to keep abreast of change and development in the world

at large. But she loved and fed on her English Bible and Lontomba New Testament, absorbing spiritual truth which she shared lavishly with many souls every day. Poetry from her hymnbook, and rich store of proverbs learned at Spelman together with African folklore and proverbs enabled her with great effectiveness and unique humour to make the Word of God real to Africans of all ages, calling them to be saved by Christ, to be made pure and clean by the "one soap," His precious blood.

Small in stature, her short legs carried her miles each day until about three years ago, though rarely beyond the limits of the mission station. In and out of huts, hospital wards and classrooms, Miss Maggie sauntered; often just up the path with folk passing her 'home by the side of the road' and back down with those going in the opposite direction. Why? Just to gossip, or as Webster defines it, "to gain new relations in the service of God." She would pass beyond her own doorstep again and again, patient and apparently unwearied as she listened to stories of sorrow, joy, heartache, perplexity, persecution or wickedness. Then from her lips would fall God's word in admonition, command, comfort, rebuke, and a plea to "tell it all to Jesus." Finally at the parting of the ways, prayer. Often the two or three with bowed heads would attract other folk, curious or friendly, and those listening-in would on occasion experience surprise as Miss Maggie spoke their names to God in prayer, so keen her eye, so quick her mind to grasp every opportunity to bring everyone to Jesus.

Miss Maggie persistently ignored time schedules, and in this respect exasperated her missionary co-workers no end. School bells could ring, church services could begin, faculty meetings convene — and invariably Miss Maggie was missing. Complain, scold, plead — it was all in vain. Each next time Miss Maggie's good intentions were upset because just about meal time or bell-time her personal intervention seemed to her very necessary — to see that a poor old man got a cup of tea, to quieting quarreling children down the road, or follow a sick person being carried to the hospital and give reassurance to the an xious relatives, to round up mischievous children with fishhooks and string instead of slates and pencils. Yes, Miss Maggie walked and walked, truly

she had learned to "walk and not to faint." Looking back over those who take time to speak oft for their Lord, to step along beside the needy folks, to gather up the careless children when others are busy keeping man-made timetables. The pity is that in readjusting schedules to anticipate Maggie's regular tardiness we never quite forgave her for being late, rarely praised her for the over-above service she did for our Lord.

Miss Maggie never married though on occasion, we know, she longed for a helpmeet and home of her own. But from 1900 until 1938 as matron and teacher she became mother and friend to hundreds of Congo women and girls who were resident in the boarding-school at the stations where she served, a task requiring wit, wisdom, infinite patience and selfless love.

In the beginning days of work at Ikoko polygamy was practiced, no word of the spoken language yet reduced to writing, every Bantu household of importance had its retinue of pygmy slaves, the witch doctor plied his trade in fetishes and nefarious acts. Mrs. Clark and her associates sought to break through the citadels of heathenism. They attended burials in order to rescue slaves or favorite wives from being buried alive with deceased masters. They helped young girls to escape from marriage to aged men or those having large harems. They searched dump-heaps and forests for babes and children, some orphaned, some abandoned because of deformity or illness, some scattered and lost during tribal wars or in the dislocation of populations during the bad years. Maggie had an uncanny way of locating many of these women and castaway children, and until about 1932 the dormitories sheltered a group whose ages varied greatly but who shared in common a need for salvation and shelter. All were given medical care, food, clothing, and opportunity for schooling and the learning of useful handicrafts. And all were taught to love Jesus, to sing and worship and work with an eye single to pleasing Him.

By 1932 the ideals of monogamy were taking root, government legislation supported Christian teaching and no longer could young girls be forced against their will into polygamous marriages to old men. Hospital facilities were now available to

care for chronic and critically ill folk. Christian parents began to appreciate the benefits of schooling in the early years for their children. So the reorganization of the girls' boarding school was possible and girls from eight to sixteen years only were eligible for entrance, while day schools were provided for kindergartners, adult women, boys and men. Miss Maggie continued as a dormitory matron until 1938. The next ten years she lived in her own three-room house of brick and cement built beside the road and mid-way between the girls' school and the hospital. She continued to help with sewing classes for the girls and taught daily the kindergartners at a little building erected near the Native village of Tondo.

By now many of the missionaries who served on these Upper Congo stations had answered the roll-call up Yonder. Native men and women taught in infancy by Miss Maggie had reared families, grown old and died. Miss Maggie lived on,and more and more Native folk looked upon her with mingled feelings of pity, awe, respect and a great fear. As she was singularly free from illness they found it difficult to explain how Miss Maggie who truly must be very old could go on living, teaching the tiny tots, walking more slowly but up and down the familiar roads cheering and helping others. The following incident may show how the people thought possibly Maggie's longevity was dependent upon the life force of others who seemed to die prematurely. About 1939 a fine Christian widow was hired to live with Miss Maggie as her companion and helper. Less than a week later while this widow was working in her garden in a distant field a torrential rain caught her unawares, she took pneumonia and three days later died. Many others were caught in the same rain, some others took ill, but only this woman died. Why? When no satisfactory answer can be found the Natives believe it best to take no chances. From then on it was impossible to challenge, cajole or persuade any woman, Christian or otherwise, to sleep in the same house with Miss Maggie at night. The Christian women promised to give her care and help during the daylight hours and were indeed faithful. But they reserved the night vigils until they knew she was close to the end of her earthly pilgrimage.

Whatever burden of aloneness and loneliness filled her heart, Miss Maggie bore in prayer to God. Apart from the oft-repeated wish to visit once more "my beloved Spelman, " to see again my teachers, and the new president Miss Read," no cries for self fell from her lips. Her anxieties were for the physical needs and spiritual welfare of her missionary friends and the thousands of people comprising the larger parish of the growing Christian church area in the Lake Tumba region just south of the Equator.

During the past three years shocks weakened Miss Maggie and gradually she had to give up her little school. But tiny tots and others continued to sit on her porch to chat, look at Bible pictures or listen to her victrola. Tender hands carried her to church services, friendly hands ministered to her at home. Sitting often on her porch her keen ears heard the tread of passersby and often recognized the voice of pupils of yesteryears now men and women grown. Calling a greeting, all would answer and the less hurried often turned into her wee flower and shrub bordered path to chat, pray or sing with Miss Maggie.

In 1925 Maggie was decorated by the Belgian Government for her devoted service in Congo and numbers of bars were added to the medal during the following decades. But the only honor which Maggie eagerly sought was hers we know when friends around heard her whisper "Safe in the arms of Jesus" and then saw the quiet peace steal over the still form and all knew she had entered into the joy of her Lord, to hear His well done, thou good and faithful servant.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. LUKE 2:14.

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